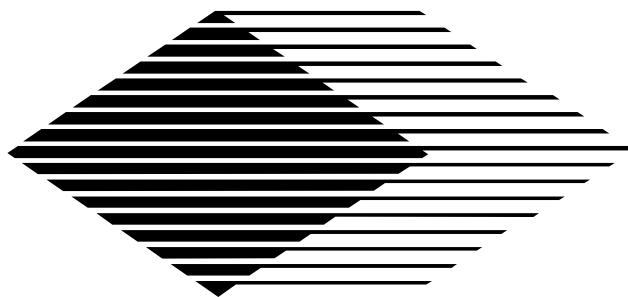


# SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

## PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



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## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The goal of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), is to provide useful part-time opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are 55 years of age or older who have poor employment prospects and also fosters individual economic self sufficiency and strives to move job-ready participants into private or other unsubsidized employment; thus, opening slots for additional persons who may enroll in and benefit from the SCSEP Program.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program does not offer permanent employment but is a community service training program funded by Title V of the Older Americans Act.

The SCSEP is designed to teach you, the participant, new and marketable skills so that you may enter the competitive job market. Your continuing enrollment in the program will depend on the availability of funds.

## **PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES**

*As a participant in the SCSEP, you are responsible to:*

- Perform the assigned duties of my community service assignment to the best of my ability, and to report to SCSEP staff immediately should any of the duties change.
- Abide by all host agency personnel policies and SCSEP rules and regulations.
- Attend all SCSEP meetings, training, classes, and other activities, as required by the SCSEP staff or my host agency supervisor.
- Seek unsubsidized employment on my own;
- Attend all appropriate job interviews to which I am referred, or instructed to arrange by the SCSEP staff;
- Report my job-seeking activities to appropriate SCSEP staff

- Notify SCSEP staff of potential training opportunities that I may be interested in helping me meet my Individual Employment Plan goal.
- Not volunteer time at my worksite without pay or compensatory time, as this is prohibited and in violation of the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act.

## **SERVICES**

### *⇒ Program Orientation*

Program Orientation to the SCSEP is provided to all new participants before they begin a community service assignment. You will not be compensated for attending program orientation. Program orientation will be held during normal business hours and shall include an overview of the following:

- Goals and objectives of the SCSEP
- Training opportunities and supportive services
- Participant's rights and responsibilities
- Assessment
- Individual Employment Plan
- Permitted and prohibited political activities
- Grievance procedures

Orientation will also include an overview of:

- The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- The Drug-Free Workplace Act
- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)

### ⇒ Host Agency Orientation

A “host agency” is either a public agency or a non-profit organization that provides supervision for one or more SCSEP participants during their community service assignment.

When the time comes, an orientation to the host agency where you will be assigned will be provided before you begin your community service assignment. You will be compensated for your attendance at the Host Agency Orientation. Orientation to the host agency will be held during normal business hours and shall include the following:

- Location of the assignment site
- Job description
- Work schedule
- Fringe benefits
- Community Service Assignment Supervisor’s name and contact information
- Administrative procedures (time sheets, leave requests, grievance procedures, etc.)
- Plans for transition to unsubsidized employment as described in the Individual Employment Plan

### ⇒ Assessment

The assessment is used to determine the most suitable SCSEP community service assignment for you. It also identifies the appropriate employment objectives for you.

The assessment is the starting point for your overall success and is the first step in writing your Individual Employment Plan.

An effective initial assessment is crucial to properly match your training needs with a host agency that will enable you to meet the goals identified in your Individual Employment Plan.

⇒ Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

You will work together with SCSEP staff to complete an Individual Employment Plan. This plan lists specific goals and needs and the action steps necessary, with associated timeframes, to achieve those goals and meet identified needs.

A summary of any counseling needs, medical assistance and personal concerns are discussed, and if necessary, supportive services such as safety glasses and tools may be provided and documented on the plan.

The IEP is reviewed with you at the completion of each identified milestone, every 30 days, or more often if appropriate. If necessary, the IEP may be revised.

⇒ Training

Training goals for program participants are designed to encompass the teaching of specific skills deemed crucial to obtaining or maintaining employment. SCSEP provides three types of training:

**Community Service Assignment**

The Community Service Assignment description is used to document the duties and responsibilities that will be expected of you at the host site.

The SCSEP staff and host agency work together to develop a Community Service Assignment description. This description is based on the goals set in your IEP.

The Community Service Assignment description is updated as your responsibilities are increased, or as new skills or tasks are added. Community Service Assignments may change with IEP goal achievement.

**Classroom and Educational Training**

You are encouraged by SCSEP to pursue courses at a high school, vocational training center or college. If these approved courses are consistent in meeting the goals set in the IEP, the program may pay for part or all of the costs, if funds are available.

## **Other Training Programs**

SCSEP often works with other training programs that have related objectives. These programs can provide information on job training, job-seeking workshops, resume writing classes, and vocational training.

⇒ Resources

## **One-Stop Career Centers**

These centers offer a variety of services depending on the location. Generally, the following services are offered:

- Career information and planning
- Skills assessment
- Job leads and placement
- Career resource library
- Computer lab for preparing or updating your resume and practicing computer skills
- Telephone, copiers and fax machines
- Referral to other needed services
- Internet access for job leads
- Local employer & labor market information
- Free informational Workshop
- Screening for training assistant programs

Check with your local One-Stop Career Center for available programs. A directory of the One-Stop Career Centers may be accessed at [www.arizonavirtualonestop.com](http://www.arizonavirtualonestop.com).

SCSEP staff may also assist you to obtain a directory.

## **TRAINING WAGE AND FRINGE BENEFITS**

⇒ Training Wage

- Training wages are set at the Arizona minimum wage rate.



- Hours of training may vary at each host agency, but should not exceed 20 hours per week.

#### ⇒ Fringe Benefits

- Voluntary physical examination
- Workers compensation coverage

Other fringe benefits are dependent upon the policy of the host agency that issues your check and may include:

- Sick leave
- Annual leave
- Paid holidays

Your earned leave must be used between July 1 and June 30 of each year. Leave does not carry over from one year to the next.

Absences from your community service assignment must be requested in advance and approved by the host agency designated supervisor and in accordance with the host agency guidelines. In the event of an unexpected illness or accident, notification must be given to your supervisor as soon as possible.

**The accumulation of three consecutive absences without notice to a designated supervisor is considered resignation from the SCSEP.**

***NOTE:*** *The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a training program and not employment. SCSEP Participants are not eligible to receive Unemployment Benefits nor retirement benefits based on training wages earned during their community service assignment.*

## **RECERTIFICATION**

All SCSEP participants are required by the Department of Labor to be re-certified annually to determine eligibility for continued enrollment. You will be notified in advance when your recertification is scheduled.

If during the re-certification process, it is determined that you are no longer eligible, SCSEP staff will assist you in contacting other available

employment and training resources. Written notification will be provided to you identifying the date of your termination from the program.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### *⇒ Drug Free Workplace*

The dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited by participants in SCSEP. Also prohibited is the use, consumption, sale, purchase, transfer or possession of any illegal or non-prescription drug by program staff or participants while on a community assignment or SCSEP sponsored training.

**Any participant who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.**

### *⇒ Lobbying*

SCSEP funds shall not be used in any way to influence the legislative process.

### *⇒ Volunteer Time*

You shall not volunteer or be asked to volunteer additional hours per week beyond your training hours. To do so is in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### *⇒ Nepotism*

You will not be assigned to a host agency site if any member of your immediate family is in a decision-making capacity at that agency.

### *⇒ Prohibited Activities & Exceptions*

While in SCSEP, you may not be selected, rejected, promoted, or terminated based on that individual's political affiliation or beliefs.

Your selection or advancement as a reward for political services or as a form of political patronage, whether or not the political patronage is partisan in nature is prohibited.

Neither you nor any staff person may engage in partisan or non-partisan political activities during time for which the person is paid with SCSEP funds.

Neither you nor any staff person may engage in partisan political activities in which the person represents himself/herself as a spokesperson of the SCSEP.

## **GRIEVANCES**

Grievance Procedures are to be identified and distributed during Program Orientation and the Host Agency Orientation.

You may request a copy of the grievance procedure from your Community Service Assignment Supervisor or SCSEP Staff should you require a copy following the orientation.

You may grieve for the following reasons:

- Service denial
- Termination

The grievance process begins when you submit a written grievance to your Community Service Assignment Supervisor.

The U.S. Department of Labor only reviews grievances that are in violation of federal law.

## **PARTICIPANT RIGHTS**

*As a participant in the SCSEP, you have the right to:*

- A suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education and employment background, and my job or development goals.
- Receive an orientation to my community service assignment host agency

- A safe and orderly training environment
- Participate fully in the development of my Individual Employment Plan.
- A community service assignment description, which accurately reflects the tasks and responsibilities of the assignment and the right to participate in updating the assignment description periodically, to accommodate changes in tasks and/or added responsibilities.
- Be treated as an employee of the community service assignment – not as free help.
- Patient and thoughtful guidance from an informed and experienced host agency supervisor.
- Obtain additional responsibilities during my community service assignment.
- Apply for permanent employment when vacancies occur at the host agency that aligns with the goals set in my IEP.
- Assistance from SCSEP staff to obtain unsubsidized employment.
- Not to be discriminated against or excluded from participation or denied benefits under this project on the grounds of race, creed, color, disability, national origin, sex, political affiliation, beliefs or age.
- Have all of my information pertaining to participation in SCSEP to be kept confidential.

## **SCSEP PARTICIPANT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

***Participant Rights and Responsibilities and Handbook Acknowledgement are to be detached from the Participant Handbook and maintained in the Participant's file in the SCSEP office.***

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- Abide by SCSEP rules and regulations and host agency personnel policies.
- Attend all SCSEP meetings, training, classes, and other activities, as required by the SCSEP staff or my host agency supervisor.
- Seek unsubsidized employment on my own.
- Attend all appropriate job interviews to which I am referred, or instructed to arrange by the SCSEP staff.
- Report my job-seeking activities to appropriate SCSEP staff.
- Notify SCSEP staff of potential training opportunities that I may be interested in helping me meet my Individual Employment Plan goal.
- Not volunteer time at my worksite without pay or compensatory time, as this is prohibited and in violation of the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED SCSEP PARTICIPANT, HAVE RECEIVED, READ, UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE TO FOLLOW THE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS STATED IN SCSEP PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED SCSEP PARTICIPANT, HAVE RECEIVED, READ, AND UNDERSTAND MY RIGHTS WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE SCSEP AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH MY RESPONSIBILITIES.

This agreement reinforces the participant's understanding of the SCSEP as a training program as well as the participant's responsibility to cooperate with all job development efforts made in his/her behalf.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature                      Date                      \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
SCSEP Staff Signature (Witness)                      Date                      \_\_\_\_\_